

REMARKS

Claims 1 and 3-17 are pending in this application. By this Amendment, claim 1 is amended to incorporate subject matter of original claim 2, claim 2 is canceled without prejudice or disclaimer, and claims 15-17 added. Support for new claims 15-17 may be found, for example, in FIGs. 1-4 and associated description. No new matter is added. Applicants respectfully request reconsideration and prompt allowance of the pending claims at least in light of the following remarks.

The courtesies extended to Applicant's representative by Examiner Ta at the interview held October 24, 2007, are appreciated. The reasons presented at the interview as warranting favorable action are incorporated into the remarks below and constitute Applicants' record of the interview.

Claims 1, 5-9 and 12-14 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. §102(b) as being anticipated by Jacob et al. (U.S. 5,964,611). Claims 1, 2, 5, 7-9, 12 and 14 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. §102(b) as being anticipated by Barbic (U.S. 4,424,407). Claims 1, 4 and 11 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. §102(b) as being anticipated by Japan Patent 3-227592. Claims 2 and 10 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over Jacob et al.

Applicants respectfully traverse the rejections. As discussed in the above-noted interview and correctly recognized by the Examiner in the Interview Summary, none of the prior art teaches or suggests "wherein said second fixing member is formed to have elasticity by its shape," as recited in independent claim 1. Accordingly, claim 1 is allowable over each of the cited references for at least that reason. Moreover, claims 3-14 are likewise allowable for at least the reason that they depend on claim 1, as well as for the additional features they recite.

Withdrawal of the rejections is therefore respectfully requested.

New claims 15-17 are allowable over the art of record for at least the reason that they depend on allowable claim 1, as well as for the additional features they recite.

In view of the foregoing, it is respectfully submitted that this application is in condition for allowance. Favorable reconsideration and prompt allowance of the claims are earnestly solicited.

Should the Examiner believe that anything further would be desirable in order to place this application in even better condition for allowance, the Examiner is invited to contact the undersigned at the telephone number set forth below.

Respectfully submitted,

James A. Oliff
Registration No. 27,075

Jessie O. Collier
Registration No. 53,839

JAO:WEC/dxc

Attachment:

Petition for Extension of Time

Date: November 19, 2007

OLIFF & BERRIDGE, PLC
P.O. Box 320850
Alexandria, Virginia 22320-4850
Telephone: (703) 836-6400

<p>DEPOSIT ACCOUNT USE AUTHORIZATION Please grant any extension necessary for entry; Charge any fee due to our Deposit Account No. 15-0461</p>
--